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DATING THE DENIERS OF GERARD IV AND OTTO II OF GELRE

(9 figures, 1 table)

Since Van der Chijs published his pioneering work (1852) numerous studies and consequently additions and corrections have appeared (f.i. De Voogt, 1867; De Jonghe, 1874; Roest, 1874; Roest, 1893; Schulman, 1940; Van Gelder, 1980b). Thoma (2001) recently published an overview, but detailed studies are needed to establish a complete chronology of Gelrian medieval coinage. This paper is one such study, concentrating on the deniers of the counts Gerard IV (1207–1229) and Otto II (1229–1271). All of these were already listed in Van der Chijs (1852), who, however, could not provide a chronology. I draw on a variety of economic, historical and numismatic studies as well as several public and private collections for constructing such a chronology. In the course of doing so, some minor additions and corrections on Van der Chijs are made (see Benders (2002) for a similar paper on Gelrian sterlings).

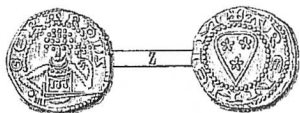
Gerard IV (1207–1229)

At least one type of denier is known of Gerard's father Otto I (1182–1207) and for several anonymous coins a Gelrian origin has been suggested (Van der Chijs, 1852; Roest, 1874; Schulman, 1940; Grolle, 2000). The complexities involved in their study warrant a separate publication, however. Gerard IV is the first Gelrian ruler whose coins bear Gelrian heraldic marks and can thereby easily be recognized as Gelrian. The three 'mispel flowers' on his deniers and the legends on his coins leave no doubt about this origin.

There are two basic types known of Gerard, both of which were probably modelled after contemporary examples.

Type I

A key characteristic of type I is the horizontal sword held on the obverse.



Obv.: GERARDVS
Rev.: +ARENHEIM
van der Chijs I under "Gerard II or III"

Van Gelder's brief article on the royal mint at Nijmegen till 1248 (1980a) is useful to date Gerard's coins. The horizontal sword also occurs on deniers, minted at Nijmegen, for the Roman King Frederik II (1212–1220). Frederik II became Roman king in 1212, was crowned Roman Emperor in 1220, and ruled (officially) till 1250. The legend of Frederik's horizontal sword-type starts with REXF., so that it can be attributed to the period before he was crowned emperor in 1220. In addition, the stylized representation of a building on the obverse is similar to that of the first city seal of Nijmegen, of which the first preserved usage dates from 1233 (Pikkemaat, 1988: 38).

However, there are also deniers of Frederik Barbarossa (1152–1190) with a horizontal sword which may also have been the source of inspiration for Gerard's minters. That seems less likely, however: there is no certainty that Barbarossa minted at Nijmegen and if so, the type that may have been Barbarossa's does not show a horizontal sword. Furthermore, it is not plausible that Gerard would fall back on a type of at least 17 years old while the minters of his father, count Otto I, had used contemporary examples of Utrecht. Hence, Gerard's type I denier was probably modelled after the one of king Frederik II, and thus dates from 1212 or later. May 1220 or shortly thereafter appears a likely end date for this emission as on April 30, 1220, Gerard was forbidden to mint (Sloet 461). The count had never been awarded this regal right and must have usurped it.

Type II

The prohibition of 1220 was not very effective, as Gerard's second type of denier proofs.



Obv.: +GERARDVS
Rev.: +*ARNEMES*
van der Chijs I

The design was inspired by another royal denier minted at Nijmegen, but now for Frederik's son Hendrik VII. Hendrik VII ruled as Roman King from 1222 until 1235, as his father preferred to stay in Italy. Initially and probably for only a short period, the type just described for Frederik

was minted for Hendrik (unpublished specimen; reported as a single find in NUMIS, the “Numismatisch Informatiesysteem” of single finds in The Netherlands, maintained at the Leyden-based Koninklijk Penningkabinet). On his later Nijmegen deniers a building or stylized representation of the city appears, as was common on the widely used deniers of the medieval metropole Cologne. Van Gelder (1980a) found it probable that Gerard had Hendrik’s coin copied, but did not exclude that the imitation went the other way around. That last suggestion is not plausible, however: there is no document to testify that Gerard had the right to mint and the prohibition of 1220 proofs he did not have this right in that year. That Gerard started minting once again was probably yet another act of usurpation, which fits the general pattern of the erosion of imperial power in the Low Countries. In case of usurpation it is unlikely that royal minters would copy from the usurpator rather than the other way around. Hence, the type II deniers must date from in between 1222, when Hendrik became king, and 1229, the year of Gerard’s death. Given that Hendrik initially had another denier minted, 1222 appears a bit too early as start of this period and a date around 1225 seems most plausible.

Otto II (1229–1271)

Otto II was born around 1215 and thus still young when his father died. Initially his maternal grandfather, Hendrik of Brabant, had a say in state affairs but Otto seems to have started acting on his own quite soon (Verbeek, 1910). Among his first deeds appears to have been the introduction of a new coat-of-arms, a lion on a dotted shield (Van Schilfgaarde, 1967).

Several coins known are known of Otto II.

Type I

The first type shows the newly introduced coat-of-arms on the obverse, and the eagle of Arnheim on the reverse.



Obv.: C-OM-ES (legend starts at 8 or 12 hours)

Rev.: ARN-EYM

van der Chijs I, 3–4

Van der Chijs speculated that Otto’s name was not mentioned on this first type because Otto did not feel confident enough to confront the powerful Roman Emperor (1852: 16). One reason for this may be that

neither his father nor Otto had been awarded the right to mint. In November 1231, emperor Frederik II confirmed that Otto should have the same rights as his father, including those usurped by the latter (Verbeek, 1910: 12 & 67; Sloet 548). With this acceptance of the *status quo*, Otto had *de jure* acquired the right to mint and consequently there was no longer a need to remain anonymous. Alternatively, the mentioning of "OTTO" on type II deniers may signal the end of his maternal grandfather's influence and start of the young count's independent reign.

The use of the vernacular "ARNEYM" rather than a Latin equivalent such as ARNEMES may indicate a controversy about the language to use. Otto's grandfather had used GREVE instead of COMES (Schulman, 1940) and his father's coins bear either ARENHEIM or ARNEMES.

Types II and III

The closely related types II and III show the Gelrian coat-of-arms on the reverse. The obverse varies slightly between both types: it shows the count holding a sword in his right hand and in his left hand what is held for a mispel flower on type II and a palm twig on type III.



Obv.: OTTO.COMES

Rev.: AR-NEM-ES (legend starts at 8 or 12 hours) / AR-NE-MES

van der Chijs I, 1-2



Obv.: +OTTOCOMES / +OTTOGELR(E)NS

Rev.: AR-NEM-ES*

van der Chijs I, 8-9

The mispel flower on type II was probably meant as yet another indication, next to the legends and the coat-of-arms, of the Gelrian origin. Illiteracy was high, so that symbols were frequently used. The new Gelrian symbol may not yet have been widely recognized. The main argument for dating these deniers relates to the question: why was the Gelrian mispel flower later replaced by a palm twig?

According to Van der Chijs (1852: 18) and Verbeek (1910: 73), the palm twig symbolizes participation in a crusade. Yet unlike his grandfather and namegiver Otto II never fought against the 'Saracens' in the contemporary Middle East. The 'crusade' in question must have been against the 'Stedingers', a Frisian tribe. The Stedingers revolted against the count of Oldenburg and the archbishop of Bremen who had demanded more tax money of his flock than the sheep had been willing to pay. After several failed attempts to discipline the Stedingers, the archbishop invoked the help of pope who called for a 'crusade' against the tribe. The call to action

initially met little success, but later several rulers rallied against the Stedingers who were defeated in the battle of Altenesch on May 22, 1234, by a combined party including Otto II of Gelre. As there are no recordings of Otto's participation in a crusade to Palestine, which in case of Otto's participation would certainly have existed, the palm twig must symbolize the count's participation in the rally against the Stedingers. Type III deniers must therefore date from after May 1234, and proudly symbolize Otto's participation in this heroic and pious endeavour.

This reasoning places type II in the period November 1231 and May 1234. This short period helps to explain their relative scarcity: substantially more specimens of type III have survived than of type II. Type III may have been minted as of 1234/1235 for 15–20 years. There is little decisive hoard evidence to support this dating, except for the hoard Beekbergen 1860 (Nahuys, 1860). This contained type III deniers, whereas the absence of coins of the Utrecht bishop Henry of Vianden (1250–1267) suggests a burial date of 1250 at the latest. Other indications may be derived from Klevian deniers. The obverse of a Klevian denier (Noss 5) of count Dirk VI (1202–1260) is based on type III, whereas its reverse with the letters "PAX" appears on deniers from Nijmegen and Utrecht in the period 1235–1250 (van Gelder, 1980a). Another Klevian denier (Noss 12) has a similar obverse, yet bears a so-called 'long cross' on the reverse (Noss, 1931: 19–23). The 'long cross' was introduced in 1247 under the English king Henry III on his new sterlings, and was copied in Scotland in 1250. It also appears on deniers of bishop Hendrik of Vianden (1250–1267) of Utrecht and on deniers of Holland which were first struck in 1256 and possible as early as 1252 (van Hengel, 1983: 57; Grolle, 2000: 56 & 71). The Klevian deniers shows that the Otto's type III and the long cross were popular at the same time, suggesting that type III was still very common around 1250. It may still have been produced in the 1250s, as a type III denier was found together with type V (see below) in the Leeuwarden hoard which was buried around 1260 (Jacobi, 1984). This argument is not very strong, however, as it may have circulated in the North years after its production had stopped.

The considerable variety on stamps and legends of type IIIB (with obverse legend +OTTOGELR(E)NS) suggests that these are more than merely die variations and that there have been several emissions. If so, this is another indication of a relative longevity. The available data do not allow, however, to distinguish these emissions.

Type IV

Type IV shows a crowned figure on the obverse and a so-called 'long cross' on the reverse.



Obv.: xOTTOCOMES

Rev.: NI-ME-GI-VM; NI-ME-GE-SI; NI-MA-...-SI;

NI-ME-...-VE; NI-ME-GE-NV

van der Chijs I, 7; Roest 32-33*

The use of the long cross suggests an introduction date of 1247 at the earliest, as elaborated upon in the previous section. Unless Otto was the first in the Low Countries to start featuring the long cross, an introduction date in the period 1252-1254 seems plausible. Type IV deniers are quite scarce, suggesting a limited emission. It probably ended in 1256 with the death of Otto's powerful ally.

The reverse legends show that this new coin was made at Nijmegen. This formerly free *Reichsstadt* came under Gelrian rule on October 8, 1247, when the newly elected Roman king Willem signed the transfer act. Willem had been elected on October 3, 1247, with heavy backing of his uncle Otto (who had declined an earlier offer of the crown). The election campaign had cost substantial amounts of money, part of which Willem borrowed from Otto. The German city of Nijmegen was mortgaged to Otto II for 10,000 marks. As the Roman king proved unable to repay his debts, Nijmegen ultimately became Gelrian. In 1257, a year after Willem's death, Otto's possession of Nijmegen was confirmed by Willem's successor Richard of Cornwall.

As Roman king, Willem initially continued minting Frederik II's last denier type (Van Gelder, 1980a). This is remarkable as Willem had been elected by a group of opposing counts and dukes while the old emperor Frederik was still alive. It is probably an indication of the popularity of Frederik's denier, of which many specimens are still known and which appears to have been imitated and/or forged on a rather grand scale (cf. Jacobi, 1984). Willem's denier is quite rare, however (cf. Pol, 1982). This suggests that only a limited number has been struck, which on its turn may indicate a short minting period. As there are no known coins struck at Nijmegen for Willem's successor Richard of Cornwall, royal mintage at Nijmegen must have stopped during Willem's rule.

The enigma of Otto's type IV is the crown on the figure's head. A crown could be worn by princes and kings, but the legend xOTTOCOMES implies that count Otto is shown. Yet Otto had no right at all to show himself crowned: this right was only awarded to his son and successor Reinald, when he was named *princeps* of the Holy Roman Empire in 1317. The crown may have signalled the city's still existing relationship to the Roman Empire or the close political ties between the

count and the king, and/or that the coin was struck with the king's consent. If so, type IV was probably minted till Willem's unexpected early death in 1256.

Van Gelder (1980a: 50) assumed the deniers of Roman king Willem of Nijmegen to have been minted in 1247 when the city was still in Willem's possession. Yet that is unlikely given that the act of transfer was signed just five days after Willem's election. Those five days would have been insufficient to issue new coins and the trouble to make new dies would probably not be taken if there were less than three months, i.e. until Otto's taking over, to use them. The possibility remains, however, royal deniers were struck at the mint as an act of allegiance to the king and, probably more importantly, to the city's rights as *Reichsstadt*. After all, count Otto had to besiege the castle and the city before he could take possession of it (Bary, Laugs and Wientjes, 1980: 25). In general, there are three possibilities:

1. during 1247–1256 royal as well as Gelrian coins were minted in Nijmegen simultaneously (as of roughly 1465 until 1704 there were also two minthouses at Nijmegen, one of the state and one of the city);
2. somewhere in between this period the royal mint closed and the count's was opened (possibly when the mortgage sum was raised from 10,000 to 16,000 marks in 1248, or after Otto had taken the castle and city);
3. until 1256 there was only a royal mint.

For the reasons outlined above, Otto's use of the crown makes the latter possibility the least likely one. The second option fits with the reasoning that the crowned figure symbolizes the continuing relationship between Nijmegen and the Empire. In the absence of any clear evidence the type IV denier can not be dated more precisely than the period 1248–1256.

Type V

Type V bears the Gelrian lion on the obverse and the single eagle of Nijmegen on the reverse.



Obv.: +OTTOCOMES(G)

Rev.: +NVMAGENC(I)¹

van der Chijs I, 7

Type V was probably introduced after the minting of type IV stopped. Deniers of Nijmegen were mentioned in an act of February 2, 1262 (Sloet

¹ Remarkably, hitherto all authors have followed Van der Chijs' description of the reverse legend as "NVMAGENE". However, even the drawing in Van der Chijs own volume shows NVMAGENC. After inspecting some 30 specimens of this coin, I have not found this legend and presumably, it does not exist.

850: “pro XIX libris Noviomagensium denariorum”), which Verbeek (1910: 72) holds for their earliest written recording. Yet it remains unsure whether type IV or V is meant here, and as earlier documents may have gone lost, this only proves that Nijmegen deniers were common currency by 1262. They still occur in (relatively) large quantities with different legends.

The Nijmegen-based ‘Museum Het Valkhof’ has a probably unique specimen of a denier struck for Dirk of Kleve.



Obv.: TEODERICV

Rev.: NVMAGENI

Photo: Museum Het Valkhof, Nijmegen

The obverse legend reads “TEODERICV”, and the reverse “NVMAGENI”. The reverse is clearly more or less identical to that of Otto’s type V, where the obverse is based on Otto’s type VI (see below). The thirteenth century Klevian counts are known for having used a variety of other rulers’ coins as examples for their own. The legend “NVMAGENI” on this particular coin is quite remarkable: other Klevian coins show legends of Klevian cities, but Nijmegen was Gelrian after 1247. Van Gelder discussed this coin and stated that it was not clear on what basis Dirk of Kleve had the right to strike it (1980a: 50). The answer appears quite simple: he had none at all. From remaining documents, it can be deduced that this coin likely dates from in between 1260 and 1266. On September 3, 1266, bishop Hendrik of Utrecht, count Willem of Jülich and Gozewijn of Borne ruled in a Gelrian-Klevian dispute that the count of Kleve should not longer mint other coins than his own nor coins whose signs and form could hardly be distinguished from those of other rulers (Sloet 896: “Item dicimus, quod, [si], comes Clivensis aliam cudi facit monetam, quam suam propriam, iniuria est, eandemque suam monetam fabricari sub tali signo et forma faciet, quod ab aliis dominorum monetis discerni valeat specialiter et agnosci”). The coin may have served to underline the claim on Nijmegen, where Kleve had held a toll for a long time. The Klevian count had probably for a long time felt hostile against Otto, but kept at ease during the reign of king Willem’s reign, Otto’s powerful ally and relative. After Willem’s death in 1256, however, Dirk VI of Kleve saw his chances and hostilities resumed (Verbeek, 1910: 35). The disputes involved many other issues, leading to treaties in 1257 and 1260, respectively (Sloet 797 and 835). Neither of these mention Klevian imitations, so that the Klevian coin with “+NVMAGENI” appears to date from the period 1260–1266.

Type VI

The obverse of type VI appears to build on type III. The latter's obverse and reverse appear combined on this type's obverse, so that it can be identified as type III's successor. The reverse shows the double-headed eagle of Arnheim.



Obv.: +OTTO-COMES / +OTTOC-OMES(G)²
 Rev.: ARN-EMES(C) / ARNE-MES(C) / ARNE-MESSI
 van der Chijs I, 5–6

There is no strong hoard evidence which helps dating, except perhaps that the Beekbergen 1860 hoard, buried in or before 1250, reportedly did not contain any of these coins. Although this hoard was only documented in small part, the fact that type III deniers are included in the description (see above) makes it probable that no later Gelrian deniers were found in this hoard.

The type VI denier is one of the few Gelrian medieval coins which is not clearly modelled after existing type. This probably reflects the considerable political and economic position of Gelre gained by the second half of the 13th century. Apparently there was no longer a need to imitate well-known types of other rulers, and two Gelrian deniers even became models for Gelre's adjoining rival Kleve (see below). They exist in a for Gelrian deniers unprecedented variety, which suggests that there were various emissions possibly over an extended period.

Besides the stylistic argument just made, another argument for dating these coins can be found in two Klevian coins (Noss 23–24) minted at Wesel for Dirk Loef. Noss attributes the imitations to Dirk Loef rather than to the Klevian count Dirk, because of the coat-of-arms on the reverse: this "Turnierkragen" is also shown on Loef's seals (Noss, 1931: 30–31). Dirk Loef was a younger brother of count Dirk VII of Kleve. He possessed the city of Wesel, whose rights he confirmed in 1255. This occasion probably marks the start of his reign at Wesel and therewith the earliest possible introduction date for his denier. The last possible year is marked by Dirk Loef's death, which was probably in 1277. Noss suggests that Loef's imitations date from the start of his reign because Otto of Gelre had been married to Loef's older step sister Margareta. She died in 1251, and Noss assumes that the Gelrian-Klevian relationships in the years immediately after her death were still so good that Otto would have tolerated these imitations (Noss, 1931: 32). However, given the out-

² One coin with the obverse legend [+OTTO]-ENAS is known (private collection). The die maker may have been illiterate and/or recovering from a heavy night when he made this die.

break of hostilities between Gelre and Kleve in 1256 a more likely explanation is that Loef, like his brother, simply went ahead without Otto's consent.

Types V and VI have been found together (NUMIS 1248) proving that they circulated in the same period. The weights of, respectively, 16 specimens of type V and 14 of type VI for which data were available on the two-digit level, indicate that type V was heavier on average and more stable as well. The average weight of the type VI-specimens was 0,577 grams (standard deviation 0,0284), whereas the type V coins averaged 0,548 grams (standard deviation 0,0658). Even if the two lightest type V coins are deleted, the average is 0,563 grams (standard deviation 0,0542). If both samples are representative, this suggests that both types are contemporaries but that type V was still made after the production of type VI had been halted. More data may falsify this hypothesis.

Two further observations have no direct bearing on dating the types, yet are relevant in the context of 13th century Gerlian coinage.

In the first place, in a document dated May 8, 1254, Godefridus and Genekinus *monetarii* are mentioned as witnesses (Sloet 761). They were also *scabini* [aldermen] of the city of Arnhem. Godefridus *monetarius* also appears in later documents dated 1262 (Sloet 862) and 1274 (Sloet 958). He was probably the founding father of family 'Munter' (Verkerk, 1992). The document of 1254 proves that *monetarii* were living in Arnhem, yet they may not have been actually producing at that time. Yet if so, the coins minted by Godefridus and Genekinus *monetarii* must have been type III and VI deniers and oboles.

Secondly, the extensions "C / CI / SI" for "Civitas" appear on types V and VI. This may point to increasing power of the cities in general and Arnhem and Nijmegen specifically. Being depended on trade, the cities' economic well-being was closely connected to a stable currency. Although the cities' direct influence on monetary affairs can only be demonstrated in the late fourteenth century, that must have been the result of a gradual movement which started much earlier (Jappe Alberts, 1979). In Holland, "CI" first appears on emissions of around 1291 (Grolle, 2000: 76–77).

Conclusion

Although hardly any documents about monetary activities in 13th century Gelre are known, historical and numismatic publications and the study of remaining coins were used to construct a chronology of the deniers of the Gelrian count Gerard IV and Otto II. The result is summarized in Table 1.

Table 1 Chronology of the deniers of Gerard IV and Otto II of Gelre

Count	Type	Period	
		Start	End
Gerard IV	I	After 1212	1220
	II	About 1225	1229
Otto II	I	1229	1231
	II	1231	1234
	III	1234	About 1255
	IV	1248	1256
	V	1256	1271
	VI	About 1256	1271

Hopefully this chronology will not remain uncontested, as additional evidence may help in refining or adjusting my proposal.

Endnote

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